

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1 and 9 as in the attached marked-up copy to read as follows:

1. (Amended) A method for producing a silicon nitride filter, which comprises

heat-treating in nitrogen a green body comprising:

from 35 to 90 mass% of silicon nitride particles having an average particle diameter of

from 1 to $30\mu\text{m}$,

from 5 to 60 mass% of a pore-forming agent and

from 0.1 to 5 mass% of metal oxide particles,

provided that the total amount of the silicon nitride particles, the pore-forming agent

and the metal oxide particles is at least 90 mass%,

to form a porous product.

2. (Amended) A method for producing a silicon nitride filter, which comprises

heat-treating in nitrogen a green body comprising:

from 45 to 85 mass% of silicon nitride particles having an average particle diameter of

from 1 to $30\mu\text{m}$,

from 10 to 50 mass% of metal oxide hollow particles and

from 0.1 to 5 mass% of metal oxide solid particles,

provided that the total amount of the silicon nitride particles, the metal oxide hollow

particles and the metal oxide solid particles is at least 90 mass%,

to form a porous product.